



PROCEEDINGS
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BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW COTTON RAT FROM VIRGINIA

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During the course of a revision of the North American cotton rats (Genus *Sigmodon*) a hitherto unrecognized subspecies was discovered. It is described as follows:

Sigmodon hispidus virginianus, subsp. nov.

Virginia Cotton Rat

Type specimen.—Adult ♀, skin and skull, No. 273535, U. S. National Museum (Biological Surveys collection); collected January 30, 1943, by John B. Lewis; original number, 705; Biological Surveys Miscellaneous No. 31384X.

Type locality.—Triplet, altitude 160 feet, Brunswick County, Virginia.

Geographic range.—As yet undetermined, but probably includes the southern portions of Mecklenburg and Brunswick counties in Virginia. Carolinian province (Dice) and Carolinian life zone.

Diagnostic characters.—A smaller, more blackish-gray subspecies, most closely allied to *Sigmodon hispidus hispidus*, but less brown. Hind feet average grayer. Skull about as in *S. h. hispidus* but smaller.

Color.—Upper parts raw umber brown mixed with black; sides buffy brown; hind feet averaging neutral gray; tail blackish above, grayish below; under parts neutral gray to whitish gray.

Skull.—Similar to that of *S. h. hispidus* but smaller.

Measurements.—*Type*: Total length, 239; tail vertebrae, 93; hind foot, 31. *Skull (type)*: Condylbasal length, 31.1; length of anterior palatine foramina, 7.2; palatal bridge, 6.1; nasals, 12.8; zygomatic breadth, 19.1; least interorbital breadth, 4.9; cranial breadth, 13.4 maxillary tooth row, 6.3.

Remarks.—When compared with *Sigmodon hispidus hispidus* from North Carolina this new subspecies averages smaller and more blackish gray.

Specimens examined.—Six, from the following localities in Virginia: Triplet (type locality), 5; Clarksville, 1.

Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., June 13, 1946.

